

# STARTING OUT...

## Wycombe Challenge

Money awarded via bidding process to be used for initiatives to improve teaching and learning within schools countywide.

BRS worked with local schools for training provided by Educational Consultants, Bucks Learning Trust representatives and professors from Cambridge University.

We covered the power of effective talk, independent learning, growth and fixed mindsets, reflection, learning journeys and encouraging children to take responsibility for their own learning.

## How do we Reach all our Children?

Initiatives are not always 100% relevant to any given school, and therefore do not become fully embedded.

This led to us thinking - how can we create something specific and relevant to BRS right now?

We decided to go right back to the very basics of learning and how it is best achieved.

What are the characteristics of good learning that we want the children who leave BRS to carry with them for the rest of their lives?



# WHY ACTIVE LEARNING?

## Tailored for Bledlow Ridge School

This is something that is unique to our school. We have structured and based it on what our children need now.

We feel that focusing on Active Learning is the most timely and important strategy we can give the children to enable them to:

- understand how they can help themselves learn
- become more effective learners who relish a challenge
- leave BRS with the life long skill of how to learn

## Based in Research

Research into the importance of talk has proved vital in our work to do with Active Learning. By considering how and why children talk we can improve how children think and respond to different situations.

James Nottingham's work on the Learning Pit links closely to Carol Dweck's research on Growth Mindsets. This is the difference between believing in fixed ability that cannot be improved or ability that can grow with practice and hard work. A fixed mindset often struggles when faced with a challenge, whereas someone with a growth mindset will be much better equipped to face that challenge - they understand the power of 'yet'.

For more detail, the presentation is available on the school website.

# HELP AT HOME

## The Brain is a Muscle

It can only grow through hard work, determination, and lots and lots of practice.

## Praise the Process

It's effort, hard work, and practice that allow children to achieve their true potential.

## Embrace Mistakes

Mistakes are a big part of the learning process. There is nothing like the feeling of struggling through a very difficult problem, only to finally break through and solve it!

## Encourage Participation

Children learn best when they are immersed in a topic and allowed to discuss and advance with their peers.

## Set High Expectations

It is commonly believed that lowering our expectations promotes self-esteem in children ("never mind, let's try an easier one"), but this is not the case. Having high expectations shows that you believe they can do it, which in turn has a positive impact on outcomes.

## Encourage Elaboration

Ask children to tell you more! What did they learn today? When did they have to persevere? What questions did they ask? Discuss learning instead of activities.

## Taking Pride

What learning did they do they are proud of? Are they proud of their efforts today? Have they taken pride in their school and their part in it?

# ACTIVE LEARNERS...

## ... do their best

We try hard and take pride in our work.

## ... look after themselves

We keep fit, eat healthily and sleep well.

## ... work well by themselves and with others

We listen to each other and  
respect different opinions.

## ... know how to help themselves

We know where to go for help  
and when to ask for it.

## ... get involved

We are focused, motivated and  
take part in lessons.

## ... are curious and ask questions

We find out things for ourselves  
at home and at school

## ... learn from their experiences

We use our feedback and mistakes  
to help us improve

## ... are organised and ready to learn

We have what we need and are  
mentally prepared.

## ... persevere

We keep trying and never give up.

## ... are positive

We have an 'I can' attitude and  
encourage others.

# USEFUL LINKS

## Oracy and Developing Talk

Developing Dialogues – Neil Mercer

[http://people.ucsc.edu/~gwells/Files/Courses\\_Folder/documents/Mercer.DevelopingDialoguepdf.pdf](http://people.ucsc.edu/~gwells/Files/Courses_Folder/documents/Mercer.DevelopingDialoguepdf.pdf)

Thinking Together in the Primary Classroom

<http://www.open.ac.uk/creet/main/sites/www.open.ac.uk/creet/main/files/08%20Thinking%20Together.pdf>

## Active Learning

Becoming an Active Learner - MHEducation

<https://www.mheducation.co.uk/openup/chapters/9780335234424.pdf>

Does Active Learning Work? – Michael Prince

[http://www4.ncsu.edu/unity/lockers/users/f/felder/public/Papers/Prince\\_AL.pdf](http://www4.ncsu.edu/unity/lockers/users/f/felder/public/Papers/Prince_AL.pdf)

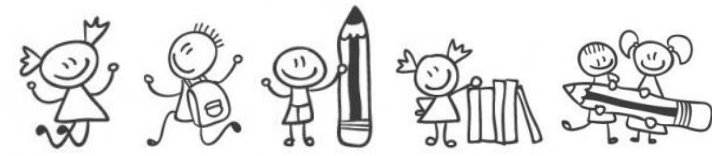
## Growth Mindsets

Fixed vs. Growth – Maria Popova

<https://www.brainpickings.org/2014/01/29/carol-dweck-mindset/>

Developing a Growth Mindset – Carol Dweck

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hiiEeMN7vbQ>



# ACTIVE LEARNING AT BLEDLOW RIDGE SCHOOL

## Launch Event

14<sup>th</sup> June 2016

“Learning is not a spectator sport.”

*D. Blocher*

